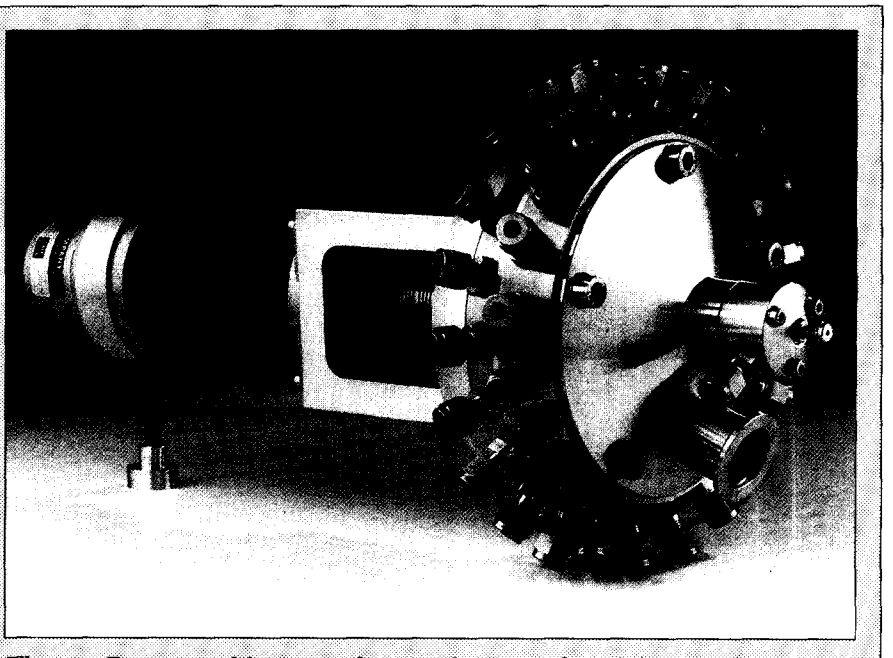
EpiCentre is a new service offered to engineers and scientists working with UHV deposition equipment. EpiCentre was formed by Richard Kubiak and Paul Stonestreet, who between them possess over thirty years in design, commissioning, manufacture and operation of vacuum-related deposition systems and instrumentation. They are therefore placed to offer impartial advice regarding all aspects of deposition processes, methodologies and performance, as well as to undertake component and system design.

EpiCentre perceive that most existing deposition facilities can be upgraded by targeting specific component improvements such as handling of larger wafers, increasing source capacity, and improving uniformity or component quality. This may entail anything from changing the methodology, to modifying, adding or replacing component parts, but generally at a fraction of system replacement costs.

Full CAD, engineering, manufacturing and fabrication services are offered.

■*For complete prospectus or to discuss your specific requirements, contact: EpiCentre, "The Twistle", Perry Mill Lane, Sambourne, Warks, B96 6PD, UK. Tel/Fax: [44] (0)1435 866650 or [44] (0)1527 892348.*



The new Proteus multistream selector valve range from Hiden Analytical Ltd. can perform rapid sample switching between up to 40 sample streams and a single point gas analyzer.

Designed for process and R&D applications where many sample points are served by a central analyzer, the valves utilise a unique self-compensating face seal arrangement (patent pending) which has been developed to provide a high integrity seal with a low wear rate for high frequency automated operation. A short internal sample transfer flowpath combined with fast actuation provide response times of less than 1 second and eliminates the flushing delays and memory problems associated with valve manifolds.

■*Contact: Hiden Analytical Ltd., Tel/Fax: [44] (0)1925 445225/416518.*

A technical partnership between Edwards High Vacuum International and Alzeta Corp (Santa Clara, CA, USA) will jointly develop the "world's first purpose-designed" PFC scrubber. It will combine patented combustion technology developed by Alzeta with Edwards' knowledge of semiconductor tool exhaust gas issues.

Two problems will be dealt with. Firstly, use of perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and resultant abatement issues, secondly, the effective treatment of particulate-forming gas without the deterioration in performance shown by conventional burn technology.

For instance, Dupont has issued a corporate policy statement requiring all users of Freon 116 to install, or have plans to install, exhaust gas abatement for this gas by December 31 1995. Supplies of the gas after this date will be dependent on the fitting of exhaust treatment. Only high temperature burners can deal with PFCs. These use hydrogen flame followed by scrubbing of the HF gas produced. These techniques have a number of shortcomings, not the least being the particulate problem.

Two years ago, Alzeta began R&D into radically different approach to the destruction of PFC exhaust. The results showed the technique's ability to efficiently destroy the PFCs and handle the high level of particulates which can be produced on deposition processes. Edwards has expertise in overall vacuum system design in the semiconductor industry including exhaust gas abatement with its "gas reactor column" (GRC) systems. The companies believe that this partnership will enable the new technology to be "packaged" into a tested product for the semiconductor industry in the shortest possible timescale and enable Edwards to offer a complete exhaust treatment capability for all processes.

Beta testing of the new system will begin at a "major semiconductor fab" in March 1995 and product introduction is scheduled for the summer.

■*Contact: Peter J Mawle, Product Manager Exhaust Systems, Edwards High Vacuum International, Units 4/5 Southfield Road, Nailsea, Bistol, UK. Tel/fax: [44] (0)1293 528844/533453.*

A new UK-manufactured DC Magnetron Drive for sputtering applications has been announced by Megatech Ltd, Havant, Hants. The MDS-1K is a kW unit, providing 1 A at up to 1000 VDC and is designed to power small magnetron sources for deposition of metals and compounds by conventional or reactive sputtering. Housed in a 19 in rack the MDS-1K provides digital metering, arc suppression, remote operation etc for a price of less than £2,000.

■*Contact: David Coleman, Megatech Ltd, Tel/Fax: [44] (0)1705 472868/470876.*